



# Esprit de Corps

A Bulletin of the Washington Service Corps

*Washington State*  
**SERVICE CORPS**  
EMPLOYMENT SECURITY DEPARTMENT

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## Martin Luther King Jr Day of Service-Special Edition

*Terri Jack, WSC Staff*

January 17, 2011 marked the 25th anniversary of the Martin Luther King Jr holiday which was founded to honor the famous civil rights leader.

The first federal holiday was observed in 1986. Banks, businesses and federal offices all close in remembrance of the man and his work throughout the country. People over the years have opted to honor the leader through service projects in their local communities. As a result, in 1994 Congress designated the day as a national day of service as well.

While Martin Luther King, Jr. is most well known for his "I have a dream" speech, there

are many quotes he has become famous for over the years.

The one that resonates with me is: *"Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?'"*

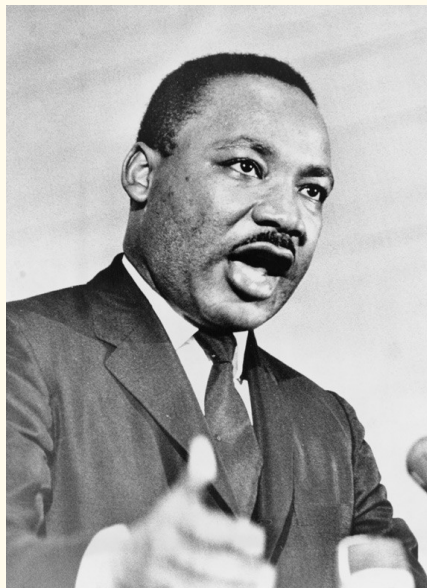
For Washington Service Corps members, MLK Jr. Day is a day on, not a day off. They continue to give of themselves, their time, their energy and their passion to do for others.

This year was no different. Members and WSC project

sites developed projects, participated in established events and sought out opportunities to serve.

This edition of the WSC newsletter is dedicated to the members, supervisors, WSC staff and community volunteers who participated in projects across the state.

While we couldn't fit in all the great pictures and stories, we thank you all for your service!



*"An individual has not started living until he can rise above the narrow confines of his individualistic concerns to the broader concerns of all humanity."*

# King County Housing Authority

*Kristina Santwan, WSC Staff*

The morning was wet and cold as I dressed for the rain and looked forward to participating in King County Housing Authority's MLK Day service project. I proudly got to serve along with their thirteen AmeriCorps members, their project supervisor Pat Porter, and two WSC VISTA leaders (Jonathan Barczyk and Carly Probasco) at Dash Point State Park.

Dash Point is located on the saltwater shoreline of Puget Sound. The park is a 398-acre camping park with 3,301 feet of campgrounds and facilities to provide guests with a great camping experience. There had been several wind and rain storms the previous few months which made for a great project for cleanup. The ground was extremely muddy and wet but that did not stop the members from getting things done!



Left to right: KCHA members Jon Schneider, Kate Elliott, Whitney Hunt and Jocelyn Lam. Kristina Santwan (far right)

The AmeriCorps members had such great energy when I met up with them at the Nature Center. The project started at 9:00 a.m. and the members were pumped and ready to make a difference. MLK Day is a "day on, not day off" so it felt great to be promoting this service ethic.

The project involved cleaning up five campsites that were completely covered with holly branches, pine branches, sticker bushes and lots of garbage. The

park rangers were diligently using their power chainsaws to cut up the debris so that it was manageable for us to move.

The project was a huge success! Our help in



Supervisor Pat Porter gets in on the action!

cleaning these campsites allowed the park to be prepared for their summer season. The park rangers said that without the AmeriCorps members, this project would never be done. Due to a loss of funding, Dash Point State Park depends heavily on volunteers to keep the parks nice. King County Housing Authority has partnered with the park service for several years and will continue to serve there in the years ahead.

This project has given me a great sense of accomplishment and reminds me every day how lucky I am to be part of the Washington Service Corps!



Members Evan Chen and Kate Sweetland-Lambird

# Intermountain AmeriCorps

*Esther Pomerantz, Intermountain AmeriCorps Team*

Martin Luther King, Jr. (Jan. 15, 1929-April 4, 1968) was a Baptist Minister, civil rights activist and perhaps one of the greatest speakers in American history. Many people participated in the well known 1963 March on Washington to hear him speak and to perhaps find some hope for our country and themselves. King's speech "I Have A Dream" were words that have lived in the hearts of Americans then and still do today.

His actions have inspired many Americans to focus their efforts on ending poverty and helping their fellow man. As proud members of AmeriCorps, there was no better day than MLK day to do just that...help our fellow man.

The Intermountain AmeriCorps visited the Hearthstone and Blossom Valley Senior Citizen Nursing Homes to provide the much respected senior citizens of our community entertainment and comfort. Every senior citizen has their own story why they were there. Some happy, some not.



Yulenia Perez, Sarah Isaacson and Erica Swanson



Members James Millikan, Lani Denny and Jennifer Matson.

We also understand that no matter what lives the senior citizens in these homes used to have, sometimes they are saddened because they cannot contribute anymore in ways our society recognizes as valuable.

We wanted to make sure that every single one of them knew how valuable they are to us because they are the ones that suffered through the hard times and still somehow survived to tell about it.

These people have taught us what worked, what didn't and what should NEVER happen again. There is an old saying "Those who are unaware of history are destined to repeat it." The Intermountain AmeriCorps members are learning machines! We want to make the world a better place and we know that we won't know where we're going until we find out where we've been.

Our KISS Project at the nursing homes was led by James Millikan. His leadership skills and great vision made it a wonderful day for all of us!

The seniors enjoyed our members singing, playing board games, creating valentines but the most precious times were those moments of intimate conversations between AmeriCorps members and seniors one on one. Each sharing their stories and wonderful memories that life has brought them. The rooms were filled with smiles, laughter and hugs. There were even AmeriCorps members creating time to go down memory lane and record some of the seniors' special moments.

When our day was done, both nursing homes applauded our efforts and were delighted with our visits. As we packed up our supplies, we were thrilled with the outcome and believed



Brigitte Forney, Heather Dunham, Heather Baker and Lani Denny

WE learned the most from that day. We walked out of those nursing home doors with bigger hearts, wiser minds and the reality that one day we may be sitting in those very chairs. So before we do, we have a LOT OF WORK TO DO to make this world a better place!

# WorkSource North Seattle

Tom Ruehli serves as an “e-learning” AmeriCorps member with the North Seattle WorkSource office. He participated in a Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service project coordinated by Shoreline Community College. Their 2nd annual MLK Day of Service food drive raised 20,573 pounds of food in just one day.

Nineteen student leaders led teams of 190 total volunteers to collect food at nine local grocery stores. Tom explained what the food drive was to supermarket customers, and what kind of food would be most beneficial to donate. Tom helped pack donations into barrels and boxes for storage and to be more easily transported.



Tom Ruehli (far left) poses with student leaders and volunteers from Shoreline Community College

All proceeds from the event were distributed to three area food banks: Volunteers of America (VOA), Hopelink and North Helpline. Volunteers consisted of Shoreline employees, students, and community friends. Following the day of service, Shoreline Community College held a MLK Celebration, which included a segment highlighting the previous day's food drive.

A few statistics:

- 1 project (food drive)
- 190 volunteers, including 7 AmeriCorps members
- 684 total volunteer hours
- 2,022 underprivileged youth served
- 7,622 community members served (including youth)

## Capitol Land Trust - Individual Placement

*Guy Maguire, Stewardship Coordinator*

On January 17<sup>th</sup>, Capitol Land Trust (CLT), working with WSU Thurston County Native Plant Salvage Project (NPSP), and South Sound GREEN, organized a joint volunteer work party to celebrate Dr. King's life and spirit of service. The event was organized primarily by three AmeriCorps IP members, including myself from CLT, Tristan Woodsmith from WSU NPSP and Megan Langhals from South Sound GREEN.

On the day of the event we had a huge turnout of over 100 volunteers, including a local “Peace Scouts” group, a group of students from the Olympia Community Schools, high school students from Olympia and Capitol High Schools, long-time volunteers of the three groups, new members from the community, and 6 AmeriCorps members! We planted about 50 (mostly 5-gallon or larger) native trees and shrubs, including Oregon ash, cascara, spirea and more. We clipped, dug, and piled hundreds of invasive blackberry plants, removed English ivy, English hawthorne and English holly from around the perimeter of the site. Volunteers flagged all the plantings from this year and replaced hundreds of flags where they had fallen off plantings from years past. We applied mulch to nourish the new plants. Finally, we weeded around the old plantings and applied mulch as necessary.

# Capitol Land Trust, continued



Guy Maguire, center in gray sweatshirt, below, working with volunteers

The theme of the event was a quote from Dr. King: "Even if I knew that tomorrow the world would go to pieces, I would still plant my apple tree." We felt that this quote, which speaks to the hope and faith which was central to the work of Dr. King, was relevant to our work in restoring the environment. Having a tree as part of the message also felt appropriate!

The day began cold and windy, and I feared the rain would come and discourage people from volunteering. We set up tents and tools, put out food and hot drinks, and organized how we would handle the volunteers once they arrived. At least 20 minutes before the start time volunteers started showing up, and before long we had a large crowd of cheery people milling about. Once there were ten or so, we would group them up into teams and do an introduction to the site and to the work, and then start them on a task. Many old-time volunteers were able to be team leaders, which was greatly appreciated.

We had many children attend, and it was a delight to work with them. I worked with a group of enthusiastic 5<sup>th</sup> graders who had no qualms about getting their hands dirty

with the planting. It made me feel so wonderful seeing their eyes light up as the trees went into the ground. The students greatly enjoyed the water-quality testing station run by Megan Langhals, the South Sound GREEN AmeriCorps member. I watched as a wide-eyed little girl gasped as the vial of water she was shaking turned color, part of testing the PH.

By 1 p.m. the group began to disperse, and some stayed later to help us pack up. Everyone looked happy, dirty, and satisfied. I was exhausted from running around the whole event, checking in on the teams and making sure everything

ran smoothly. All the staff from the three groups, including myself, were very happy with the outcome, and we talked about making this event an annual occurrence. On behalf of WSU Thurston County Native Plant Salvage Project, Capitol Land Trust, and South Sound GREEN, I'd like to thank all our volunteers for attending, the Washington Service Corps for support, and the Washington Commission for National and Community Service for funding assistance!



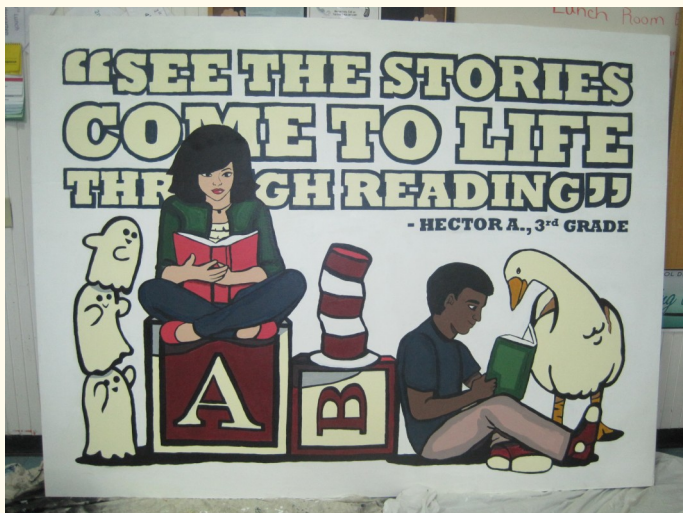
# Community Youth Service WA Reading Corps

Six Community Youth Service (CYS) WA Reading Corps members in the Grays Harbor area held a Grays Harbor disaster preparedness drive as their Martin Luther King Jr. Day service project. The goal was to raise funds to build disaster kits for vulnerable and disabled adults that are served through Coastal Community Action Council in Aberdeen. The members collected approximately \$350 in donations. The members were able to get two different radio stations to donate time—KXRO with Pat Anderson let the members have 15 minutes where they were able to talk about their project, the WA Reading Corps and AmeriCorps in general. Radio station Sunny 102.1 announced the event on the air.



From left to right: CYW Members Megan Anderson, Jadya Beyer, Tobi Lee

Tyee Park Elementary and Madison Early Learning members, along with two members from other programs conducted a "Tyee Park Mural Project" on January 17th. They collected 175 mural idea submissions from students. Along with 16 community volunteers and 7 students, murals were painted on the south-facing wall of the gym at Tyee Park. Prior to the project, the wall was decorated with a few posters, but was mostly void of



decoration. The wall now displays two murals measuring 6 ft. x 8 ft. The themes of the murals are literacy and diversity. In between the murals is a plaque dedicated to the students and staff from the 2011 AmeriCorps Team.

# Community Youth Services, continued

Members at Christensen and Central Avenue Elementary schools participated in a “civil rights celebration”. Six members, along with 13 students learned about Martin Luther King Jr., and completed a paper handprint quilt. Members provided students with a day of fun, safe and educational activities about Martin Luther King Jr.’s life.

“We were overwhelmed by the amount of effort and engagement on the part of otherwise difficult to manage students. The day was a success!”



Members left to right: Scott Gross, Roger Franklin, Jessica Inman, Lorraina Liss, Grace Deyer and Foster Lumpkin-Liggins.

## Upcoming Event for members

**NW Service Symposium**  
**May 19-20, 2011**  
**Portland State University**

### Call for Submissions

National Service participants from Oregon and Washington are invited to submit creative projects that reflect upon the service experience to this one-of-a-kind contest and event. Project submission deadline: March 31, 2011

### Get Connected

The more participants put into it, the more they take away. Not only does the symposium provide a way to connect with your fellows in service through the arts, the project and experience you create for yourself can become a lasting memento of your service. It's never too early to start planning your project!

Questions? Email [joanne.lau@educationnorthwest.org](mailto:joanne.lau@educationnorthwest.org) or 1-800-547-6339, extension 596



## Upcoming Important Dates and Events

February 14-20, 2011 Random Acts of Kindness Week  
[www.randomactsofkindness.org](http://www.randomactsofkindness.org)

February 21, 2011 President's Day Holiday

March 31, 2011 Submission Deadline for NW Service Symposium



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